

CLAIMS

1. A framework for controlling access rights to digital content in a distributed information system comprising:

first storage means for storing a reference to a user registered in said framework;

second storage means for storing a reference to digital content registered for said user;

and

third storage means for storing a reference to a digital secure repository registered for said user, the digital secure repository containing storage means for storing a unique identifier and a reference to said digital content.

2. The framework according to claim 1, further comprising:

fourth storage means for storing a reference to a rendering device registered for said user.

3. The framework according to claim 1, further comprising:

a communication link for establishing communication to one or more of the set of said secure repository and said rendering device.

4. The framework according to claim 1, wherein said secure repository further comprises storage means for storing a digital key for decrypting said digital content.

5. The framework according to claim 1, wherein said secure repository further comprises storage means for storing a reference to a rendering device.

6. The framework according to claim 1, wherein said secure repository further comprises storage means for storing content rights for said digital content.

7. The framework according to claim 1, wherein said secure repository further comprises storage means for storing a reference to said user.

8. The framework according to claim 1, wherein said secure repository further comprises a communication link for establishing communication to one or more of the set of said framework and said rendering device.

9. The framework according to claim 1, wherein the framework is realized as a set of web applications forming an Internet web site.

10. An Internet web site offering a framework for controlling access rights to digital content in a distributed information system according to claim 1.

11. A method for controlling access rights to digital content in a distributed information system comprising the steps of:

registering a user with a framework for controlling access rights to digital content in said distributed information system;

registering a digital secure repository registered for said user; and
registering digital content registered for said user.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein registering a user further comprises the steps of:

receiving a message from said user comprising a reference to said digital secure repository;

validating said reference to said digital secure repository; and
storing a reference to said user.

13. The method according to claim 11, wherein registering a digital secure repository further comprises the steps of:

receiving a message from said user comprising credentials of the user;
validating said credentials;

if the credentials are valid, issuing a new digital secure repository; and
storing a reference to said issued digital secure repository and sending it to the user.

14. The method according to claim 11, wherein registering digital content further comprises the steps of:

receiving a message from said user comprising an order request and a reference to the user's digital secure repository;

validating said reference;

if the reference is valid, performing purchase formalities;

if all formalities are performed, encrypting the document encryption key associated with the requested digital content with the public key associated with said digital secure repository; and

returning the encrypted document encryption key to the user and registering the purchased digital content for said user.

15. The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of registering a rendering device for said user.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein registering a rendering device further comprises the steps of:

receiving a message from said user comprising credentials of the user and a reference to said rendering device to be registered;

validating said credentials;

if the credentials are valid, storing the reference of the rendering device associated with said user.

17. A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to claim 11.

18. A method for rendering digital content on a rendering device comprising the steps of:
receive a request for rendering digital content in a predetermined form;
reading information about access rights granted;

if access rights cover the requested form of rendering the digital content, getting a document encryption key encrypted with the public key associated with said rendering device;

decrypting the document encryption key with the private key associated with said rendering device;

decrypting said digital content with said document encryption key; and
rendering said digital content in the requested form.

19. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of getting a document encryption key further comprises the steps:

determining from a storage device associated with said rendering device whether or not the digital content is bound to said rendering device and if yes receiving said document encryption key from said storage device.

20. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of getting a document encryption key further comprises the step of receiving said document encryption key from a digital secure repository.

21. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of reading from a digital secure repository further comprises the step of communicating with said digital secure repository over a communication link.

22. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of reading from a digital secure repository further comprises the step of retrieving said digital secure repository from a storage device also keeping said digital content.

23. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of decrypting said digital content further comprises the step of retrieving said digital content from a storage device.

24. The method for rendering digital content on a rendering device according to claim 18, wherein the step of decrypting said digital content further comprises the step of retrieving said digital content from over a communication link as downloaded or streaming data.

5 25. A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to claim 18.

26. A method for binding digital content to a rendering device, the method comprising the following steps:

10 establishing a connection from said rendering device to a digital secure repository;
requesting from said digital secure repository digital content rights for specified digital content;

15 if binding is allowed according to the rights stored in said digital secure repository,
receiving the respective document encryption key encrypted with the rendering device's public key, and storing the encrypted key for later decrypting the respective digital content.

27. A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to claim 26.

20 28. A method for storing digital content from a rendering device onto a storage device, the method comprising the following steps:

establishing a connection from said rendering device to a digital secure repository;
requesting from said digital secure repository digital content rights for specified digital content;

25 if storing is allowed according to the rights stored in said digital secure repository,
receiving the respective document encryption key encrypted with the respective public key of all rendering devices registered in said digital secure repository, and storing the encrypted keys together with said encrypted digital content on said storage device.

